

While steps taken by key platforms to combat disinformation and misinformation are positive, there is more to be done if current self-regulatory arrangements are to succeed.

In coming months the ACMA will focus on testing whether the self-regulatory arrangements put in place by the industry are effective or whether further actions are needed.

The ACMA will also work with government to put in place additional powers for the ACMA, designed to encourage platforms to adopt “best practices” to address harms and to demonstrate their actions are effective, through transparent reporting. These powers will provide an important backstop if self-regulatory approaches do not deliver for Australian users of these services.

The ACMA will continue to assess models developing in the EU and UK to combat misinformation and disinformation, including new approaches such as algorithmic risk assessments.

Areas the ACMA will focus on in coming months include:

Firstly, the platforms’ annual activity reports must provide consistent Australian specific data that demonstrates how effective platforms’ actions are in combatting misinformation and disinformation on their platforms.

Secondly, in their upcoming review of the Code, the industry must consider ACMA’s report recommendations to strengthen the Code, including expanding the definition of “harm” and including -private messaging.

Thirdly, complaints handling processes must work for users. Do the public know how to alert platforms to misinformation and disinformation and can they be confident their concerns are being effectively addressed.

Fourthly platforms active in Australia who are not signatories to the Code must sign up.